

**MINUTES
STATE PRESERVES ADVISORY BOARD
CRESCO UNION SAVINGS BANK ANNEX
CRESCO, IOWA
SEPTEMBER 8, 1995**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Shirley Schermer, Chairperson
Diane Ford-Shivvers
Joel Hanes
Robert Kindwall
Jonathan Steege
Lois Tiffany

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Larry Wilson

ADVISORS PRESENT

Dorothy Baringer

ADVISORS ABSENT

Rebecca Conard
Kathy Gourley
Jane Hey
Jan Nash
Robert McKay
Daryl Smith

STAFF PRESENT

Daryl Howell
John Pearson
Arnie Sohn

STAFF ABSENT

Mike Carrier

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Schermer called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

APPROVE AGENDA

The following adjustments were made to the agenda:

- Add - Item #13 - Strasser Woods Archaeological Survey
- Add - Item #14 - Bixby State Preserves
- Add - Item #15 - Request for Study at Gitchie Manitou

Motion was made by Jonathan Steege to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Robert Kindwall. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVE MINUTES

Chairperson Schermer noted that Rebecca Conard was not listed under "Advisors Present," at the June 19 meeting and the minutes should reflect that she was present.

Motion was made by Joel Hanes to approve the meeting minutes of June 19, 1995, as amended. Seconded by Robert Kindwall. Motion carried unanimously.

OATH OF OFFICE

Chairperson Schermer acknowledged outgoing Board member, Martha Maxon and expressed appreciation for her work on the Preserves Board.

Daryl Howell, on behalf of the Director and Board members, presented Martha Maxon with a plaque for her efforts and dedication to the Board.

Martha Maxon expressed her pleasure in serving on the Preserves Board and related that she will continue to closely follow their work.

NEW BOARD MEMBER

Chairperson Schermer welcomed Lois Tiffany, Chair of the Botany Department at ISU, to the Preserves Board.

Robert Kindwall, Vice-Chair, administered the Oath of Office to new Board member, Lois Tiffany and re-appointed Board member, Shirley Schermer.

STAFF ACTIVITY REPORT

Daryl Howell presented the following list of Preserves related activities covering the period of June - September 1995.

- Letters of permission to collect on state preserves as approved by the Board in June
- Preparation of materials for the September meeting and the 50th anniversary ceremony at Hayden Prairie
- Information requests concerning preserves
- Inspections of Woodman Hollow and Liska-Stanek preserves
- Completion of revisions to the Mossy Glen management plan
- Attended the 10th International Bat Research Conference and a pre-conference workshop concerning research techniques for bats
- Indiana bat study at Walnut Creek National Wildlife Refuge
- Preparation for Natural History Foray

Mr. Howell indicated that he spent 45% (236 of 520 hours) of his time on preserves related activities.

John Pearson listed the following SPAB related activities for the same period.

- Administration: finished three research contracts from 1994-95; initiated five research contracts for 1995-96; letters of permission for approved research; information requests; agenda preparation; supervised intern Jennifer Francois
- Consulted with Paul Anderson and Mike Miller about GLO mapping project
- Consulted with Don Farrar and Bill Norris about permanent plot project
- Hayden Prairie: aspen control; assisted Paul Christiansen with vegetation study; delivered posters to Howard County Conservation Board
- Brief visits to Mericle Woods, Woodland Mounds, Pellett Woods, Mt. Talbot
- Conducted summer prairie burn in Stone State Park (not in preserve)
- Attended Brushy Creek Trail Advisory Board meeting; unauthorized trail in SW part of preserve replaced with route outside of preserve
- Brushy Creek -- additional trail study at four locations

Mr. Pearson stated that he spent 25% (104 of 400 hours) on preserves related activities. He related that he also took a three week vacation during this period.

Mr. Pearson outlined the following preserves related work done by John Fleckenstein from June to September.

- Contract administration and review of the invertebrate study final report funded by the board
- Information requests

- Endangered species surveys
- Supervised intern Jennifer Francois

Mr. Fleckenstein spent 15% (80 of 520 hours) on preserves related work.

Jennifer Francois, intern, worked a total of 200 hours as follows:

- 30% on Natural Areas Inventory projects, mainly data management
- 25% on correction of GIS soil data layers for preserves from ISU project
- 25% on developing index to SPAB minutes
- 13% for assistance to Angela Corio for Montauk State Preserve planning
- 7% other (state fair exhibit)

Total staff hours for preserve-related activities tallied 606.

RESEARCH CONTRACTS FOR 1994-1995 - FINAL REPORT

John Pearson distributed copies of the study by Paul Christiansen on Hayden Prairie. Also distributed was a report on Heritage Plots at Mann Wilderness Area, Hardin City Woodland, and Fallen Rocks, by Don Farrar and James Raich. He presented a final report on GIS Map Digitizing of 1832-1859 vegetation. He related that it included 70 counties and will eventually cover the whole state.

RESEARCH CONTRACTS STATUS FOR 1995-1996

John Pearson reported that all contracts are in progress and some have actually been completed. He related that the Phase I archaeological survey of Searryl's Cave and Mericle Woods are finished. Also, Paul Christiansen has completed his work on the study at Hayden Prairie.

INDEX TO SPAB MINUTES

John Pearson stated that the intern, Jennifer Francois, has developed an index of the SPAB minutes from 1965 - 1995. Topics include preserve name, date, and special issues such as hunting, equestrian use, and tree harvest.

Mr. Pearson distributed copies of the completed SPAB Index. He stated that the minutes are kept in three separate places; the department's Records Center, the state's Central Archives, and in Daryl Howell's office. He noted that there are some gaps where the minutes are missing completely.

Dorothy Baringer stated that there was a period of time when the Board did not meet, probably during 1971-73. She related that it was early in Governor Ray's term and it may be reflected somewhere in the 1975-76 minutes.

Chairperson Schermer stated that Ed Cawley, one of the first members of the Board, has a large collection of SPAB material and is willing to turn it over to the Board or the Historical Society.

Discussion took place in regard to microfiching copies of the minutes.

REQUEST TO COLLECT PLANT MATERIAL IN PRAIRIE PRESERVES

John Pearson stated that a request to collect plant material in prairie preserves was received from Julie Otterson, a doctoral student at the University of Minnesota. He related that she would like to collect leaves and seedheads from 200 plants of four species, in twelve preserves. This would be a part of a genetic research project extending from Minnesota to Oklahoma. He related that staff granted permission to do the study. He noted that she ran short of collecting partridge pea as it couldn't be found and she is going to come back this weekend and collect it from some of the state parks.

Brief discussion followed as to the locations of partridge pea.

WORK PRIORITIES FOR 1996

Chairperson Schermer stated that she, Mike Carrier, Daryl Howell, and John Pearson discussed the possibility of developing a list of priorities the Board would like to see accomplished. She related that Mike suggested that the Board provide a list but not set a time allotment for it, and Daryl and John could subsequently set up a work plan for the priorities.

During a lengthy discussion of the various items members would like to see included, the following list was established:

- John Pearson - Clarify what scope of duties the Board want to consider as preserves related in regard to John and Daryl's activities.
- Joel Hanes - continued commitment to clerical duties and field work to keep data up to date
- Martha Maxon - need data base fine tuning and long range plans
- Shirley Schermer - compile new list of preserves that need management plans, and include old plans that need updating
- Jonathan Steege - apportion staff time spent on duty areas to seasonal, such as planning in winter, and field work in other seasons
- Daryl Howell - need archaeological plans for some preserves
- Dorothy Baringer - important to have a date on the plans, and also be dated when revisions are made
- Shirley Schermer - need for cross-referencing of information and updating preserve work in the files
- Joel Hanes - keep tickler file to assure study reports are received

- John Pearson - area managers should send in annual reports (could alert staff of any problems)
- Shirley Schermer - use comment form for indicating problems, etc. when visiting an area
- Martha Maxon - make comment forms available to local volunteers and let it be known the Board is looking for information from the public
- Shirley Schermer - use Home Page to get information out about the Board
- Joel Hanes - develop closer communication with local CCB's
- Shirley Schermer - consider interpretive signage along interstate and rest areas - also consider seeking ISTEAF funds
- Arnie Sohn - focus exhibit at State Fair on preserves next year

Joel Hanes asked that the Board be provided a copy of the comment form that was used in the past to make notations when visiting a preserve. He also asked staff to bring a listing of which preserves need management plans to the next Board meeting.

Staff will develop the priorities list and accompanying work plan for 1996 and provide it to the Board at the next meeting.

REVIEW OF HAYDEN PRAIRIE ISSUES

John Pearson reviewed recent work done at Hayden Prairie dealing with the brush problems. He noted there were several work days over the past two years where work was done on controlling the aspen. He related that if staff continue brush control annually it will maintain the condition of the prairie. Mr. Pearson noted that Paul Christiansen did the original study of Hayden Prairie vegetation in 1970, and has been back out there several times over the years. His most recent study was done this past summer.

Paul Christiansen distributed copies of his preliminary report entitled "Frequency Study of Hayden Prairie, 1995." He presented details of the study and reviewed earlier studies in 1970 and 1977. He covered the results of the study outlining haying, grazing, burning practices, and changes occurring in various species over time. He related that this recent study was a very crude, quick and easy method, but a more detailed study would cost much more than this one. Mr. Christiansen noted that, in 1970, he recommended that reassessment be done every five years.

Lois Tiffany asked if there is any concern for a particular species at Hayden.

Mr. Christensen stated that there is nothing of particular concern, adding that there is no reason to think one point in time would be any better than another in terms of prairie.

Chairperson Schermer asked Mr. Christiansen if his recommendations will address management of the prairie.

Mr. Christiansen stated that he will be as specific as he can in regard to management.

Jonathan Steege asked, in regard to doing an exhibit on preserves at the State Fair if the exhibit could later be displayed at the prairie itself, possibly at Hayden.

John Pearson indicated that the County Conservation Board has planned for a kiosk to go in at Hayden Prairie.

Helen Perkins, Howard County Sesquicentennial Committee, stated that they received grant money for two kiosks. Also, a brochure was prepared to place at Hayden for visitors to the prairie. She introduced CCB members who helped with the project.

Discussion followed in regard to focusing attention to the preserves.

Arnie Sohn stated that he would welcome any suggestions to be used in a preserves exhibit. He suggested keeping the wording brief on an exhibit because the people move through and do not want to spend time reading a lengthy narrative.

Discussion followed regarding the use of interpretive brochures and signs. Chairperson Schermer suggested having an agenda item on this issue in December.

Chairperson Schermer acknowledged Glenn Crossman and thanked him for his longstanding interest and dedication to prairies.

STRASSER WOODS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Daryl Howell reported that the Office of State Archaeology completed an archaeological survey at Strasser Woods. He noted that the report from Kathy Gourley indicates there are no problems or conflicts with the trail going in at Strasser Woods. He related that her report recommends the Board approve the trail.

Motion was made by Jonathan Steege to approve the proposed trail at Strasser Woods as planned. Seconded by Joel Hanes. Motion carried unanimously.

BIXBY STATE PRESERVE ICE CAVE

Chairperson Schermer stated that Robert McKay sent her and Daryl Howell a letter regarding unsafe conditions at the ice cave at Bixby preserve.

Jean Prior stated that Mike Bounk, Geological Survey Bureau staffperson, received a report from Park Ranger, Bob Schaut that some individuals from Sierra Club requested to enter the cave. He asked that an inspection be made because of recent rock movement enlarging the cave's passage. She noted that Mike Bounk and Bob Schaut inspected the cave and found two timbers in the passage but no historic artifacts were found. Also, there were no indications of lead present. Ms. Prior stated that the fact that a new area of the cave had opened up indicated it could be dangerous for people to be in there. She added that it is slippery and contains loose rock. She related that Mike and Bob recommended that entry be restricted to experienced cavers who are familiar with mechanical karst. She indicated that a wooden fence has been erected along the left side of the path to the cave entrance to keep visitors off the cold air slope, where an endangered species of snail has been found.

Chairperson Schermer asked if there is a need to set a policy indicating that access will not be granted because of the conditions.

Daryl Howell stated that he thinks it should be more of a departmental decision going through Mike Carrier and Bob Schaut.

Discussion followed regarding the fence possibly blocking the air flow from the slope and thereby affecting the snail habitat.

John Pearson stated that he does not think the fence would have any effect on diverting the air from the slope.

It was decided that Daryl and John will visit the area to see if there could be any impact from the fence.

REQUEST FOR STUDY AT GITCHIE MANITOU

Daryl Howell stated that he received a request from Dr. James Christiansen, Drake University, to do a survey of small mammals at Gitchie Manitou. He expanded on details of the survey.

Motion was made by Joel Hanes to approve the request for study from James Christiansen as presented. Seconded by Robert Kindwall. Motion carried unanimously.

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

Robert Kindwall nominated Shirley Schermer as Chair.

Motion was made by Jonathan Steege to cease nominations and the secretary cast a unanimous ballot for Shirley Schermer as Chair of the Preserves Board. Seconded by Robert Kindwall. Motion carried unanimously.

BOARD TOUR

In conjunction with Prairie Heritage Week, the Board will attend a ceremony at Hayden Prairie this afternoon commemorating its 50th anniversary.

DECEMBER BOARD MEETING

Chairperson Schermer reviewed that at the last meeting a suggestion was made to hold the December Board meeting on the third Tuesday, so that Rebecca Conard and Jan Nash could be present to report on the historical preserves recommendations. The next meeting will be Tuesday, December 19, at the Wallace State Office Building in Des Moines.

Chairperson Schermer announced that she has posters and brochures commemorating Archaeological Week available for anyone who is interested.

John Pearson expressed thanks to Larry Stone for his photo contributions to the Prairie Heritage Week Poster.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the State Preserves Advisory Board, Chairperson Schermer adjourned the meeting at 11:05 a.m., Friday, September 8, 1995.